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The Kalendar of Shepherds

A Rule to knowe how many dayes
every moneth in the
yeare hath.

*Thirty dayes hath September,
April, June, and Nouember,
February eight-and-twenty all alone,
And all the rest haue thirty-one,
Unless that leap-year doth combine
And giue to February twenty-nine.*

The Return from Parnassus (1606).

This book first
issued m.cm.viii.



The Kalendar of
Shepherds: being
Devices for the
Twelve Months



Table

	PAGE
Introduction	5
January	9
February	13
March	17
April	21
May	25
June	29
July	33
August	37
September	41
October	45
November	49
December	53

Wherefore this Table serves, wouldst have me tell?
 Reader, truth is, I know not very well
 Myself; only sometimes such pretty knacks
 I have observed in other Almanacks.
 If thou do any knowledge gain thereby,
 Reader, thou art more wiser far than I;
 That which to put it in did me ingage
 Was only to fill up a vacant page.

Poor Robin's Almanack, 1664.

Introduction

IN the year of grace 1493 was published in Paris the first known edition of a book which soon became famous, and remained popular for at least two centuries. "Le compost et Kalendrier des bergiers," as the book is called, was printed by Guiot Marchant, the famous craftsman, and copies are now exceedingly rare. One, dated July, instead of April, 1493, is in the Grenville Library of the British Museum, which possesses a wide range of various editions of the interesting compilation. That the contents were not exactly original is shown by the remark on the title-page of the *editio princeps* that the Kalendar had been "nouuellement zeffait et autremêt compose que nestoit parauant." It is not easy to trace the material or the idea of the book to its origins, but its elaborate description of the Seven Deadly Sins, with their endless subdivisions and ramifications, is taken, like the Parson's Tale in Chaucer, from a treatise written in the thirteenth century by Friar Lawrence (Lourens or Lorens), who was confessor to King Philip III. of France. The actual date of composition of the friar's book is given in Caxton's translation from the French version as 1279. A hundred years later Jehan de Brie, who was known as "le bon berger," wrote a little volume for the use of shepherds, to which in subsequent editions the title of "Vray régime et gouvernement des bergers et bergeres" was given. It has been stated that the Shepherds' Kalendar has much in common with this extremely rare and extremely practical treatise; but beyond the fact that both appeal to shepherds the two productions are quite distinct. Possibly, however, the "Vray Régime" may have suggested to the anonymous compiler of the Kalendar the notion of addressing his exhortations to all good Christian people through the shepherds. Besides, these last were connected in the world's thought with the story of the Nativity, and this may have been an additional reason for making a Kalendar of Shepherds.

In the present book an attempt has been made to reproduce satisfactorily the twelve large woodcuts, representing man's occupa-

tions throughout the year, which are to be found in some of the French editions of the original "Compost." To this end the Troyes edition of 1529 has been employed, as the cuts therein are better than those of other issues.

The complete set is given in the following editions, and possibly in one or two others:—

Paris	.	.	.	.	1493
"	.	.	.	.	1499
Troyes	.	.	.	.	1529
"	.	.	.	.	1541

The English printers appear to have contented themselves at most with making a good start for the Kalendar by using the block for January, leaving the other months unillustrated; and indeed the same may be said for the majority of the editions, whether French or English. It is believed that these strikingly vivid illustrations of country life in the Middle Ages have never been reproduced in modern times, with the exception of the January cut already mentioned, which was given by Dr H. O. Sommer in his annotated and critical reprint of the Paris edition of 1503 (issued in facsimile, with reprint of Pynson's London edition of 1506, in 1892).

In the attempt to trace these woodcuts to earlier studies of the same subjects, a somewhat hasty and partial search among illuminated MSS., such as the fine collection of psalters and "Hours of the Virgin," which is at the disposal of students at the British Museum, soon revealed the fact that the subjects chosen as being typical of man's varying occupations from month to month were used from very early times. Possibly, indeed, they date back to the first illustrated calendar that was ever drawn. At any rate, they are found in germ in very early MSS., and were repeated with more or less elaboration of treatment by many generations of artists throughout the centuries. Such variations as were made were due to the inventiveness and observation of particular workers, and as a rule the improvements which are observable from time to time were retained by their successors. But though some of the miniature painting is of exquisite delicacy, and full of detail and a sense of atmosphere that is amazing considering the available space—often but a single square inch—nothing was found that displayed a closer study from Nature than the vigorous woodcuts of the Compost. In many cases, indeed, the work is merely traditional and artificial in manner, suggesting the

aloofness and retirement of the cloister rather than direct observation in the open air. About the same time, it is true, towards the close of the fifteenth century, some Flemish artists drew a remarkably fine series of illustrations for a calendar, which are to be found among the British Museum MSS., Add. 18,855 and 24,098. These full-page miniatures, which for sheer beauty of colour and drawing have probably never been surpassed, show to what a pitch of perfection the art could attain in the hands of a master. Yet, splendid as they are, they do not give a stronger impression of actuality than the rugged engravings of the French book. The miniatures give us minutely detailed pictures of farming by wealthy landowners who look on while the labourers do all the work. In the Compost the farmer and his wife, with her keys dangling from her girdle, are shown working side by side with their men. Here, pictured for the twentieth-century reader, is the workaday life of the Middle Ages, in all its realism. But there are hints, too, that the terrible descriptions of peasant life, as given by Michelet and other modern historians, do not tell us the whole truth about the matter. There were, doubtless, hardship and cruelty such as we in these days can hardly realise. But even in the midst of the harrying and brutality there were intervals of peaceful, happy toil; and, as the woodcuts suggest, there was also, in some cases at least, that sharing of work between master and man which does so much to lessen grievances and to promote goodwill.

It should be added that the order in which the designs are used varies in different editions of the Compost and also in the MS. calendars. As, however, the signs of the Zodiac, two of which appear in each cut, are invariable, they have now been arranged in what is their true order, the signs following each other in fitting sequence from month to month.

The shepherd, who is also the author, is represented as a deeply religious man who goes so far as to call this world a "vale of wrechednes," but for all that he sees no particular virtue in meeting death before the natural term of existence. Listen to some scraps of his experience. "Here byfore tyme there was a shepherde kepyng his shepe in the feldes which was no clerke ne vnderstode no manere of scripture nor wretynge but only by his naturall wyt. He sayeth that lyuynge and dyenge is all at the wyll and pleasure of almighty god. And he sayeth that by the course

of nature a man may lyue thre score and xii. yere. or more. For euery man is xxxvj. yere olde or he come to his full strengthe and vertue. And than he is at the best bothe in wysdome and also in sadnes and dyscrecyon. For by xxxvj. yere and if so be that he haue nat gode maners than It is vnlykely that euer he shall haue gode maners after whyle he lyue.

“Also lyke wyse as a man is waxynge and grownyge xxxvj. yere. so it is gyuen hym as many mo to enclyne and go fro the worlde by the gyfte of nature And they that dye byfore that they be thre score and xii. yere olde ofte tyme it is by vyolês or outrage of themself. and they that lyue aboue that terme is be gode gouernance and gode dyet.

“The desyre of this shepherde was to lyue longe holyle and to dye well. . . . Therefore saythe this sheparde. I wyll lyue soberly with these smale temporall goodes that Jhesu hath lente me and euer to exyle the desyre of wordely ryches & wordely worshyp. For they that laboureth for it and haue a loue to theyr goodes. And vayne worshype offt it departes man for the heuenly treasoure. It shetteth mânes harte that gode may nat entere. And byldys man a place of no rest in the low londe of darkenes.” (Pynson’s edition of 1506).

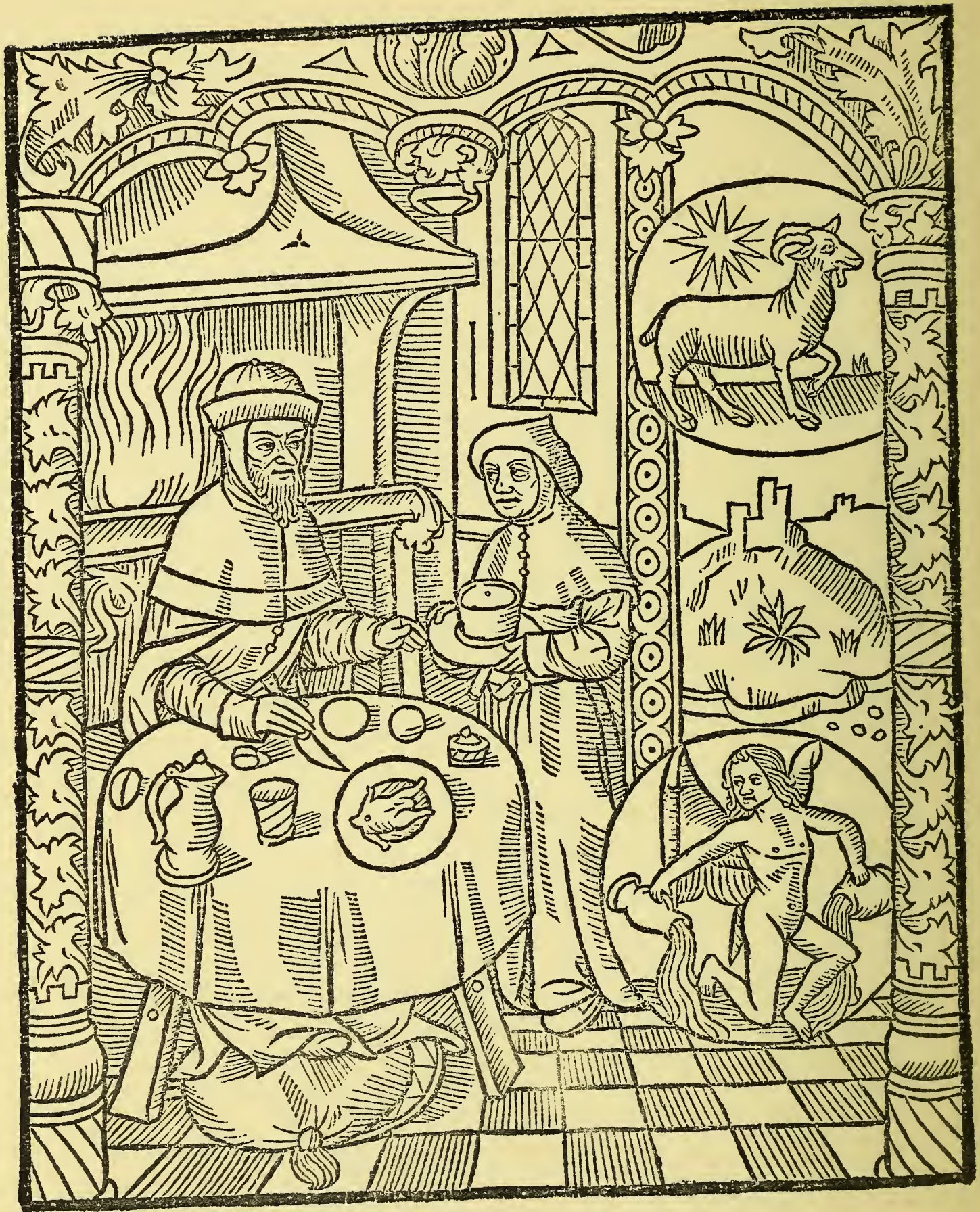
Surely the writer, churchman as he probably was, had yet remained in close touch with the needs and frailties of human nature.

Each month is treated thus—on the first page is its name and number of days, followed by a couplet from Tusser’s “Five Hundred Pointes of good Husbandrie” (1599). On the second page is the woodcut, faced by a black-letter copy of a doggerel rhyme, and a prose passage comparing each month of the year with the twelve ages of man (in periods of six years each); these are translations from the French original. Nicholas Breton’s little volume of “Fantasticks” (1626) has been plundered to provide the letterpress for the last of the four pages. The reader will find here, in spite of a certain inevitable monotony of treatment, something of the out-door spirit of joyousness and the zest of living which we have come to associate with the Elizabethan age. The text is that of Grosart’s edition of Breton’s Complete Works in the Chertsey Worthies Library.

A. H. DIPLOCK.

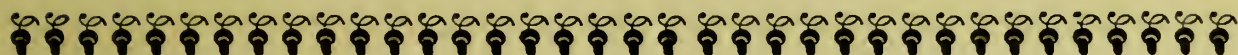
January hath xxxi days

A kindlie good Janiueere
Freeseth pot by the feere.

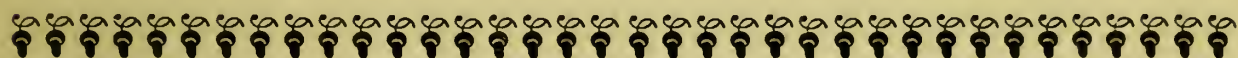


January

I make me to be called Janiuere,
In my time is great stormes of coldnesse,
For unto me no moneth of the yeare,
May compare, if I aduance me doubtlesse,
For in my time was (as clarkes do expresse)
Circumcised the Lord omnipotent,
And adored by kings of the Orient.



All shepheards say, that the age of a man is lxxii.
years, and that we liken but to one hole yeare,
for euermore we take sixe yeare to euery month, as January,
or Februarie, and so forth, for as the yeare changeth by
the twelue moneths, into twelue sundry manners, so doth
a man change himselfe twelue times in his life, by twelue
ages, and euery age lasteth sixe yeare, if so be that he
liue to lxxii. for three times sixe maketh eightene, and
six times six maketh xxxvi. And then is man at the best,
and also at the highest, and twelue times six maketh lxxii.
and that is the age of a man.



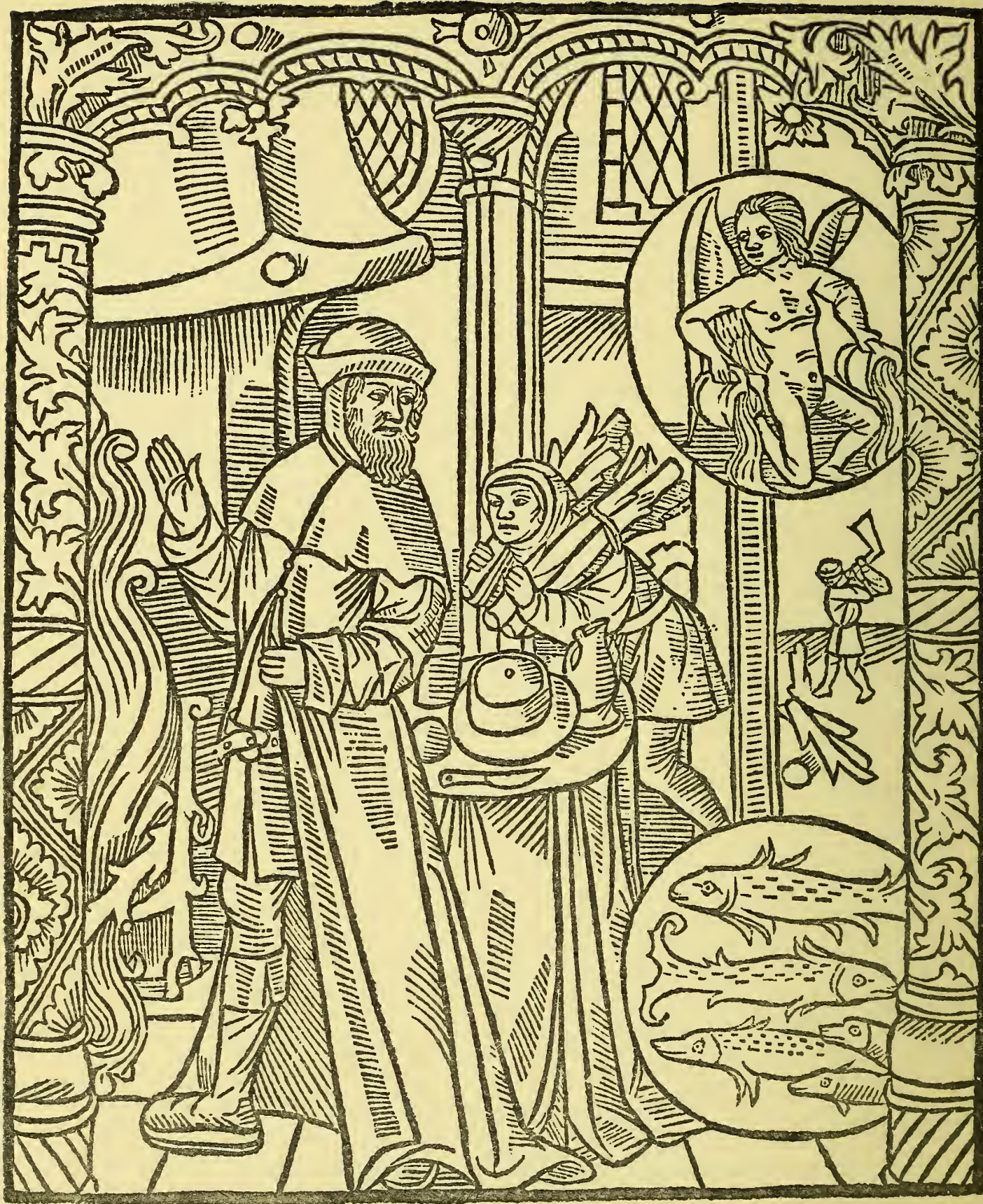
Take the first six yeare of January, the which is of
no vertue nor strength, in that season nothing on
the earth groweth. So man after he is borne, till he be
six yeare of age, is without witte, strength, or-cunning,
and may do nothing that profiteth.

January

IT is now January, and Time beginnes to turn the wheel of his Reuolution, the Woods begin to lose the beauty of their spreading boughes, and the proud Oke must stoop to the Axe: the Squirrell now surueyeth the Nut and the Maple, and the Hedgehogge rowles up himselfe like a football: an Apple and a Nutmeg make a Gossips cup: and the Ale and the Fagot are the Victuallers merchandise: the Northerne black Dust is the during Fuell, and the fruit of the Grape heats the stomake of the Aged: Downe beds and quilted Cappes are now in the pride of their seruice, and the Cooke and the Pantler are men of no meane office: the Oxe and the fat Weather now furnish the market, and the Coney is so ferreted, that she cannot keepe in her borough: the Currier and the Lime-rod are the death of the fowle, and the Faulcons bels ring the death of the Mallard: the trotting gelding makes a way through the mire, and the Hare and the Hound put the Huntsman to his horne: the barren Doe subscribes to the dish, and the smallest seed makes sauce to the greatest flesh: the dried grasse is the horses ordinary, and the meale of the beanes makes him goe through with his trauell: Fishermen now haue a cold trade, and traellers a foule journey: the Cook room now is not the worst place in the Ship, and the Shepheard hath a bleake seat on the Mountaine: the Blackbird leaueth not a berry on the thorne, and the garden earth is turned up for her roots: the water floods runne over the proud bankes, and the gaping Oister leaues his shell in the streets, while the proud Peacocke leaps into the pye: Muscouia commodities are now much in request, and the water Spaniell is a necessary seruant: the Lode horse to the Mill hath his full backe burthen; and the Thresher in the barne tryes the strength of his flayle: the Woodcocke and the Pheasant pay their liues for their feed, and the Hare after a course makes his hearse in a pye: the shoulder of a hog is a shooing horne to good drink, and a cold almes makes a beggar shrug. To conclude, I hold it a time of little comfort, the rich mans charge, and the poore mans misery. Farewell.

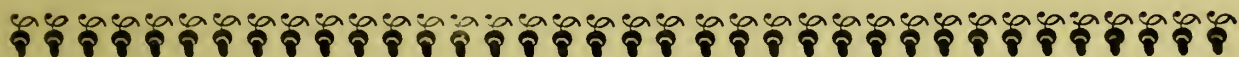
February hath xxbiii days

February fill the dike
With that thou dost like.



February

I AM Februarie the most hardy,
In my season the pure mother virginall,
Offered her sonne in the temple truly,
Making to God a present speciall,
Of Jesus Christ the king of kings all,
Betweene the armes of the Bishop Simon,
To whom pray we to haue his remission.



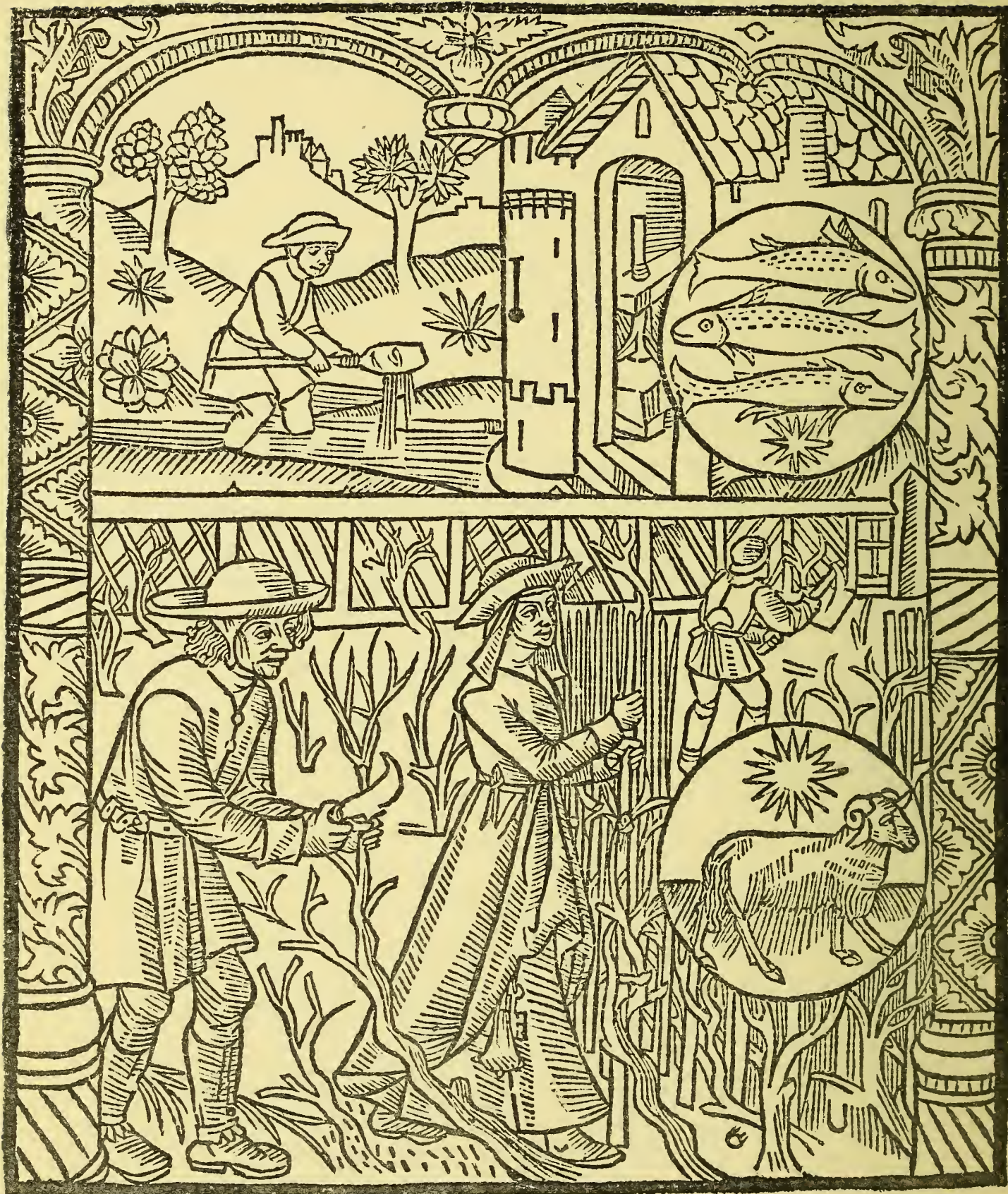
Then commeth February, and then the dayes beginne
to waxe in length, and the sunne more hotter, then
the fieldes beginne to waxe greene: So the other sixe
yeares til he come to twelue, the child beginneth to grow
and serue and learne such as is taught him.

February

IT is now February, and the Sun is gotten up a Cocke-stride of his climbing, the Valleyes now are painted white, and the brookes are full of water: the Frog goes to seeke out the Paddocke, and the Crow and the Rooke begin to mislike their old Makes: forward Connies begin now to kindle, and the fat grounds are not without Lambes: the Gardiner fals to sorting of his seeds, and the Husbandman falls afresh to scowring of his Plough-share: the Terme trauellers make the Shooemakers Haruest, and the Chaundlers cheese makes the chalke walke apace: the Fishmonger sorts his ware against Lent: and a Lamb-skinne is good for a lame arme: the waters now alter the nature of their softnes, and the soft earth is made stony hard: The Ayre is sharp and piercing, and the winds blow cold: the Tauernes and the Innes seldome lack Guests, and the Ostler knows how to gaine by his Hay: the hunting Horse is at the heeles of the Hound, while the ambling Nagge carrieth the Physitian and his footcloth: the blood of Youth begins to spring, and the honour of Art is gotten by Experience: the trees a little begin to bud, and the sap begins to rise vp out of the root: Physick now hath work among weake bodies, and the Apothecaries drugges are very gainfull: There is hope of a better time not farre off, for this in it selfe is little comfortable: and for the small pleasure that I find in it, I will thus briefly conclude of it: It is the poor mans pick-purse, and the misers cut-throat, the enemy to pleasure, and the time of patience. Farewell.

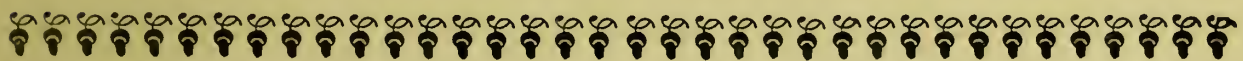
March hath xxxi days

March dust to be sold,
Worth ransom of gold.



March

March am I called in noblenesse flourishing,
Which among monethes, am of great noblenesse,
For in my time all the fruits do bud and spring,
To the seruice of man in great largnesse,
And Lent is in me, the time of hollynesse,
That euery man ought to haue repentance,
Of his sinnes done by long continuance.



Then commeth March, in the which the laborer soweth
ye earth & planteth trees, & edifieth houses, the child
in these six yeares wareth big to learn doctrine & science,
& to be faire & honest, for then he is xviii years of age.

March

IT is now March, and the Northerne wind dryeth vp the Southerne durt: The tender Lippes are now maskt for feare of chopping, and the faire hands must not be vngloured: now riseth the Sunne a pretty step to his faire height, and Saint Valentine calls the birds together, where Nature is pleased in the varietie of loue: the Fishes and the Frogs fall to their manner of generation, and the Adder dyes to bring forth her young: the Ayre is sharpe, but the Sunne is comfortable, and the hay beginnes to lengthen: the forward Gardens giue the fine Sallets, and a Nosegay of Violets is a present for a Lady: Now beginneth Nature (as it were) to wake out of her sleepe, and sende the Traueller to suruey the walkes of the World: the sucking Rabbit is good for weaké stomackes, and the dyet for the Rhume doth many a great Cure: The Farrier now is the horses Physitian, and the fat Dog feeds the Faulcon in the Mew: The Tree begins to bud, and the grasse to peepe abroad, while the Thrush with the Black-bird make a charme in the young Springs: the Milke-mayd with her best beloued, talke away wearinesse to the Market, and in an honest meaning, kind words doe no hurt: the Foot-ball now tryeth the legges of strength, and merry matches continue good fellowship: It is a time of much worke, and tedious to discourse of: but in all I find of it, I thus conclude in it: I hold it the Seruant of Nature, and the Schoole-master of Art: the hope of labour, and the Subject of Reason. Farewell.

April hath xxx days

Sweet April showers,
Do spring May flowers.



April

Among all moneths I am lusty Aprill,
Fresh and wholesome vnto each creature,
And in my time the dulcet drops distill,
Called Cristall as Poets put in scripture,
Causing all stones the longer to endure,
In my time was the resurrection
Of God and man by diuine election.



Then commeth April, that the earth and the trees is
couered in greene and flowers, and in euery part
goods increaseth abundantly, then commeth the child to
gather the sweet flowers of hardines, but then beware
that the cold windes & stormes of vices beat not downe
the flowers of good maners, that he should bring man to
honour, for then he is xxiiii yeare old.

April

IT is now April, and the Nightingale begins to tune her throat against May: the Sunny showers perfume the aire, and the Bees begin to goe abroad for honey: the Dewe, as in Pearles, hangs vpon the tops of the grasse, while the Turtles sit billing vpon the little green boughes: the Trowt begins to play in the Brookes, and the Sammon leaues the Sea, to play in the fresh waters: the Garden-bankes are full of gay flowers, and the Thorne and the Plumme send forth their faire Blossomes: the March Colt begins to play, and the Cosset Lamb is learned to butt. The Poets now make their studies in the woods, and the Youth of the Country make ready for the Morris-dance; the little Fishes lye nibling at a bait, and the Porpas playes in the pride of the tide: the Shepheards pipe entertaines the Princesse of Arcadia, and the healthful Souldier hath a pleasant march. The Larke and the Lambe look vp at the Sun, and the labourer is abroad by the dawning of the day: Sheepes eyes in Lambs heads, tell kind hearts strange tales, while faith and troth make the true Louers knot: the aged haire find a fresh life, and the youthfull cheeks are as red as a cherry: It were a world to set down the worth of this moneth: But in summe, I thus conclude, I hold it the Heauens blessing, and the Earths comfort. Farewell.

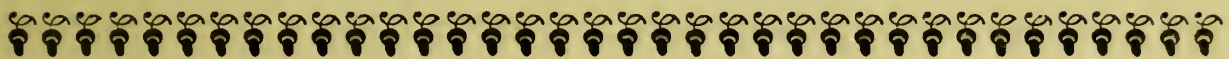
May hath xxxi days

Cold May and windy
Barne filleth up finely.



May

Of all the moneths in the yeare I am king,
Flourishing in beauty excellently,
For in my time in vertue is all thing,
Fields and meads spred most beauteously,
And birds sing with right sweete harmony
Reioycing louers with hote loue all indued,
With fragrant flowers all about renewed.



Then commeth Maie, that is both faire and pleasant,
for then birdes sing in woodes and forrests night
and day, the sunne shineth hot, and as then is man most
ioyfull and pleasant, and of liuelier strength and seeketh
playes, sports, and lusty pastime, for then is he full xxx.
yeare.

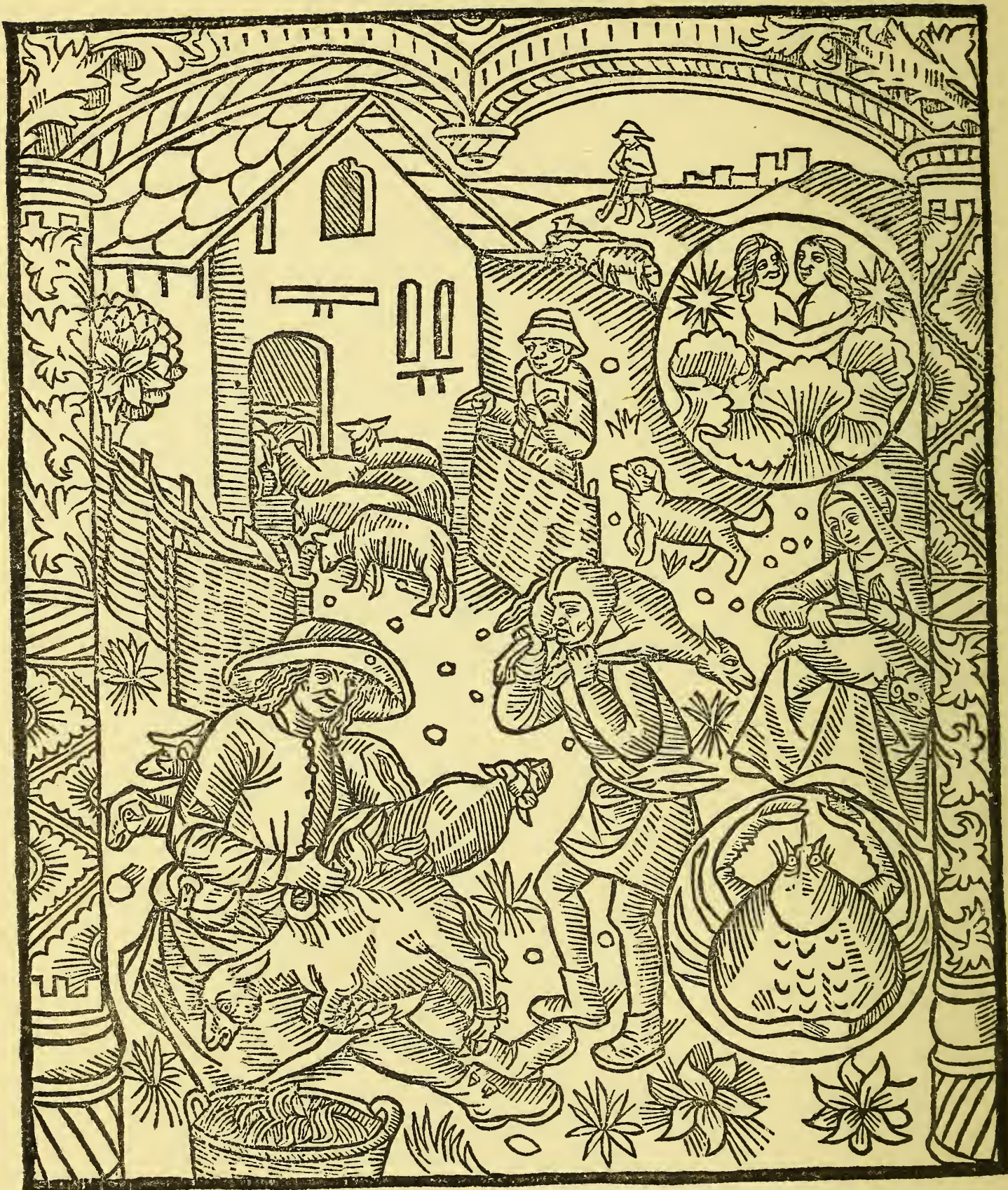
May

IT is now May, and the sweetnesse of the Aire refresheth euery spirit: the sunny beames bring forth faire Blossomes, and the dripping Clouds water Floraes great garden: the male Deere puts out the Veluet head, and the pagged Doe is neere her fawning: The Spar-hawke now is drawne out of the mew, and the Fowler makes ready his whistle for the Quaile: the Larke sets the morning watch, and the euening, the Nightingale: the Barges, like Bowers, keep the streams of the sweet Riuers, and the Mackrell with the Shad are taken prisoners in the Sea: the tall young Oke is cut downe for the Maypole: the Sithe and the Sickle are the Mowers furniture, and fayre weather makes the Labourer merry: the Physitian now prescribes the cold Whey, and the Apothecary gathers the dew for a medicine: Butter and Sage make the wholsome breakfast, but fresh cheese and creame are meat for a dainty mouth: and the Strawberry and the Pescod want no price in the market: the Chicken and the Ducke are fatned for the market, and many a Goslin neuer liues to be a Goose. It is the moneth wherein Nature hath her full of mirth, and the Senses are filled with delights. I conclude, It is from the Heauens a Grace, and to the Earth a Gladnesse. Farewell.

June hath xxx days

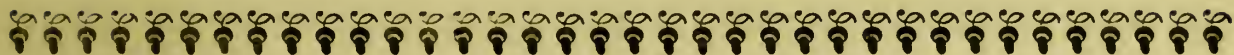
Calme weather in June.

Corne sets in tune.



June

Who of my season taketh right good heede,
Dught not at all my name to adnull,
For in my time, for all the commons weede,
From sheepe is shorne all the flesh and wooll,
And had in marchandise, by great ships full
Duer the sea, wherefore we ought to pray
Unto our Lord, and thanke him night and day.



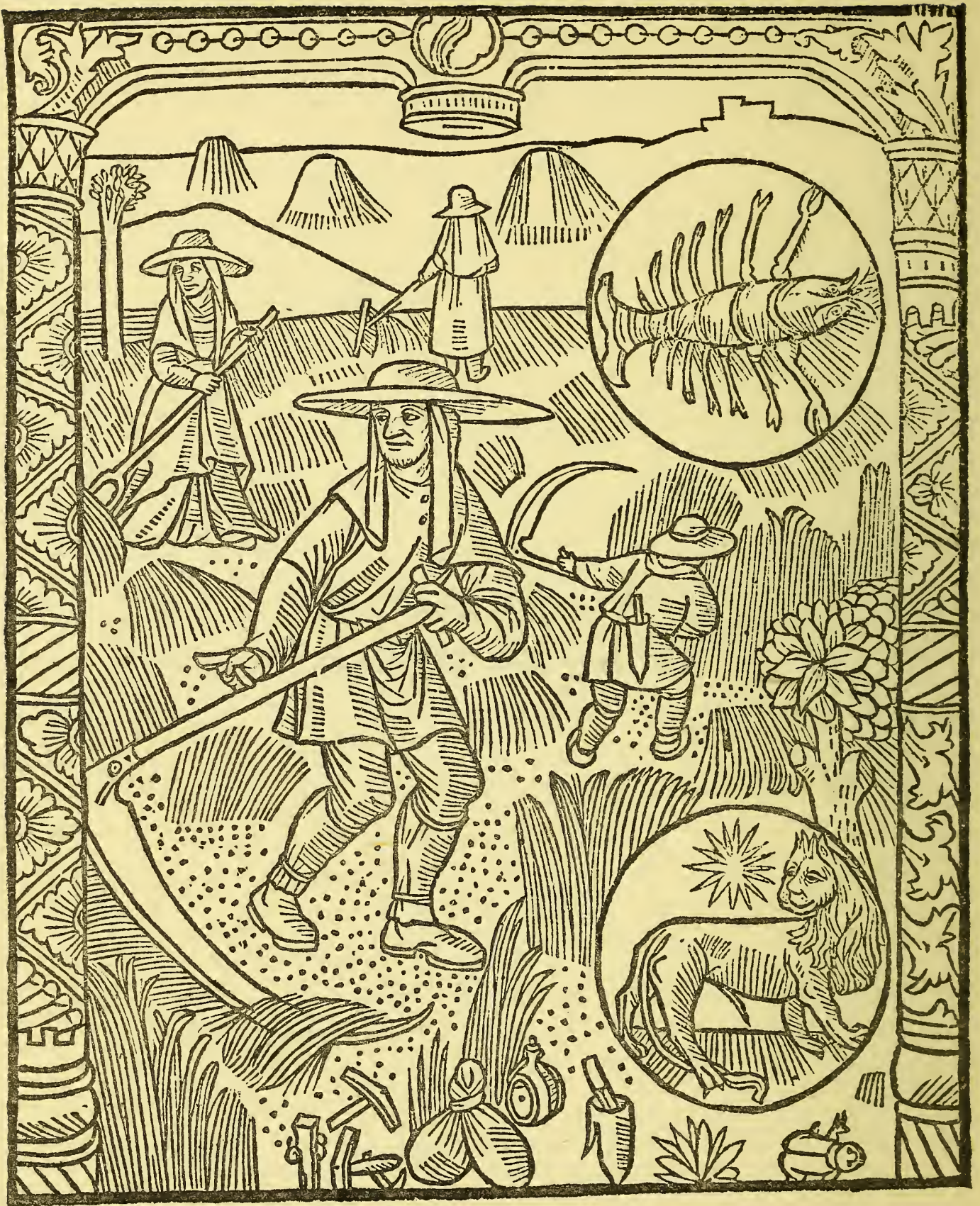
Then commeth Iune, and then is the sunne highest
in his meridiornal, he may ascend no higher in his
station, his glimering golden beams ripens the corne, &
when man is xxxvi. yeare, he may ascend no more, for
then hath nature giuen him beauty and strength at the
full, and ripeneth the seedes of perfect vnderstanding.

June

IT is now Iune and the Hay-makers are mustered to make an army for the field, where not alwayes in order, they march vnder the Bagge and the Bottle, when betwixt the Forke and the Rake, there is seene great force of armes: Now doth the broad Oke comfort the weary Laborer, while vnder his shady Boughes he sits singing to his bread and cheese: the Hay-cocke is the Poore mans Lodging, and the fresh Riuer is his gracious Neighbour: Now the Faulcon and the Tassell try their wings at the Partridge, and the fat Bucke fills the great pasty: the trees are all in their rich aray: but the seely Sheep is turned out of his coat: the Roses and sweet Herbes put the Distiller to his cunning, while the greene apples on the tree are ready for the great bellied wines: Now begins the Hare to gather vp her heels, and the Fox lookes about him, for feare of the Hound: the Hooke and the Sickle are making ready for haruest: the Medow grounds gape for raine, and the Corne in the eare begins to harden: the little Lads make Pipes of the straw, and they that cannot dance, will yet be hopping: the Ayre now groweth somewhat warme, and the coole winds are very comfortable: the Sayler now makes merry passage, and the nimble Foot-man runnes with pleasure: In briefe, I thus conclude, I hold it a sweet season, the senses perfume, and the spirits comfort. Farewell.

July hath xxxi days

No tempest good July,
Least corne looks ruly.



July

If that my time were praised all aright,
Among all moneths I am one of the chiefe,
For I enripe through my great force & might,
Fruits of the earth to man and beasts reliefe,
Feeding horses, kine, muttons, and strong beefe,
With other properties that I could tell,
But I must passe, I may no longer dwell.



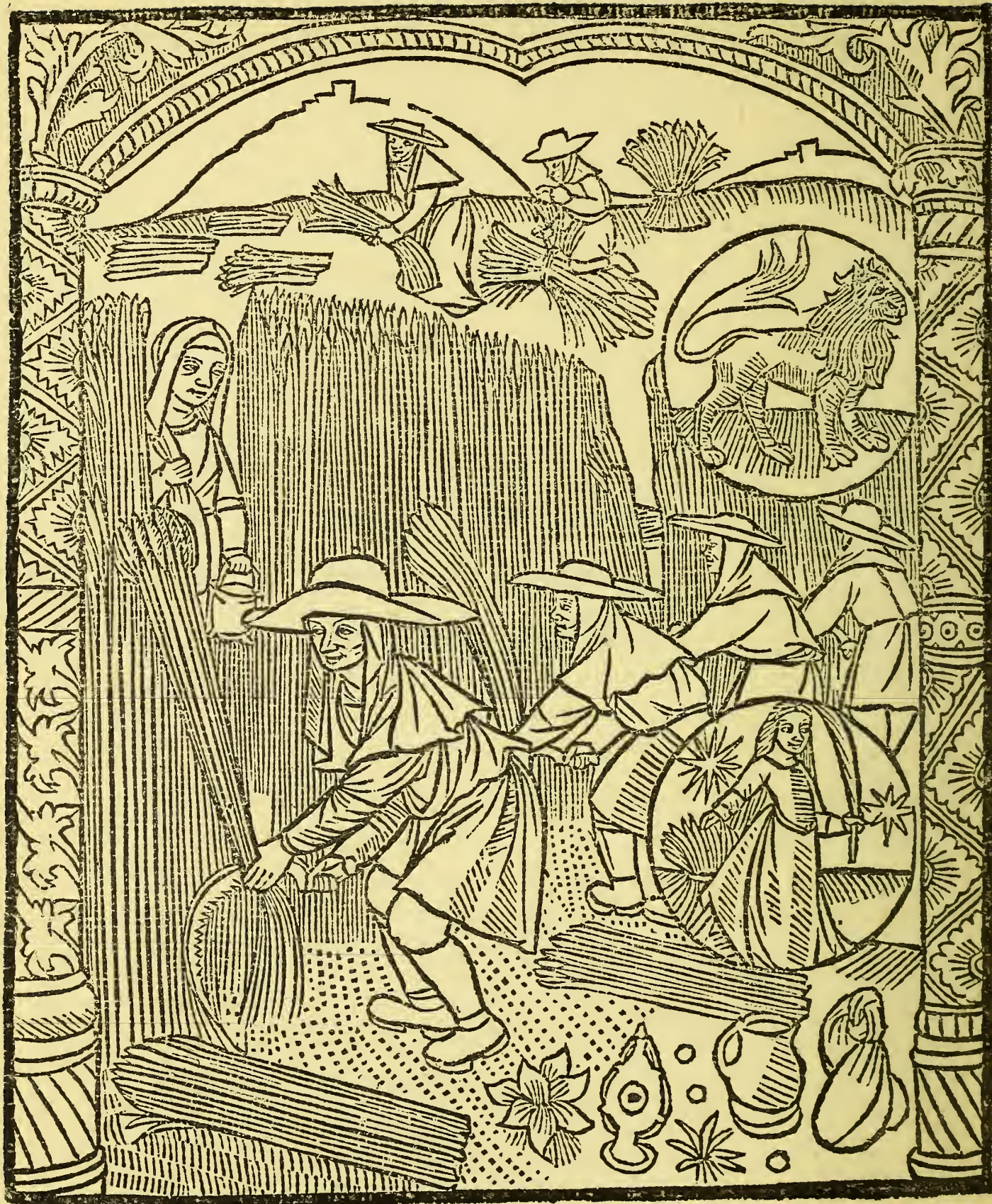
Then commeth Iuly, that our fruits bin sette a sun-
ning, and our corne a hardening, but then the sunne
beginneth a little for to descend downeward, so man then
goeth from youth toward age, and beginneth to acquaint
him with sadnesse, for then he is xlii. yeare.

July

IT is now Iuly and the Sunne is gotten vp to his height, whose heat parcheth the earth, and burnes vp the grasse on the mountaines. Now begins the Canon of heauen to rattle, and when the fire is put to the charge, it breaketh out among the Cloudes: the stones of congealed water cut off the eares of the Corne: and the blacke stormes affright the faint-hearted: the Stag and the Bucke are now in pride of their time, and the hardnesse of their heads makes them fit for the Horner: Now hath the Sparhawke the Partridge in the foot, and the Ferret doth tickle the Cony in the borough. Now doeth the Farmer make ready his teame, and the Carter with his whip, hath no small pride in his Whistle: Now doe the Reapers try their backs and their Armes, and the lusty Youthes pitch the sheafes into the Cart. The old Partridge calls her Couey in the morning, and in the euening, the Shepheard fals to folding of his flocke: the Sparrowes makes a charme upon the greene Bushes, till the Fowler come and take them by the dozens: the Smelt now begins to be in season, and the Lamprey out of the Riuer leapes into a Pye: the Souldier now hath a hot March, and the Lawyer sweats in his lyned Gowne; the Pedler now makes a long walke, and the Aqua vitae Bottle sets his face on a fiery heat: In summe, I thus conclude of it, I hold it a profitable season, the Labourers gaine, and the rich mans wealth. Farewell.

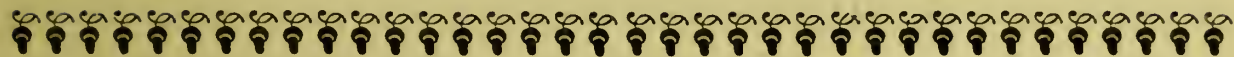
August hath xxxi days

Dry August and warm,
Doth haruest no harme.



August

I AM named the hot moneth of August,
For redolent heat of Phœbus brightnesse,
In my time each man ought to haue lust
To labour in haruest, with great businesse,
To reape and sheeffe, eschewing idlenesse,
And rise early with perfect diligence,
Thanking our Lord of his great prouidence.



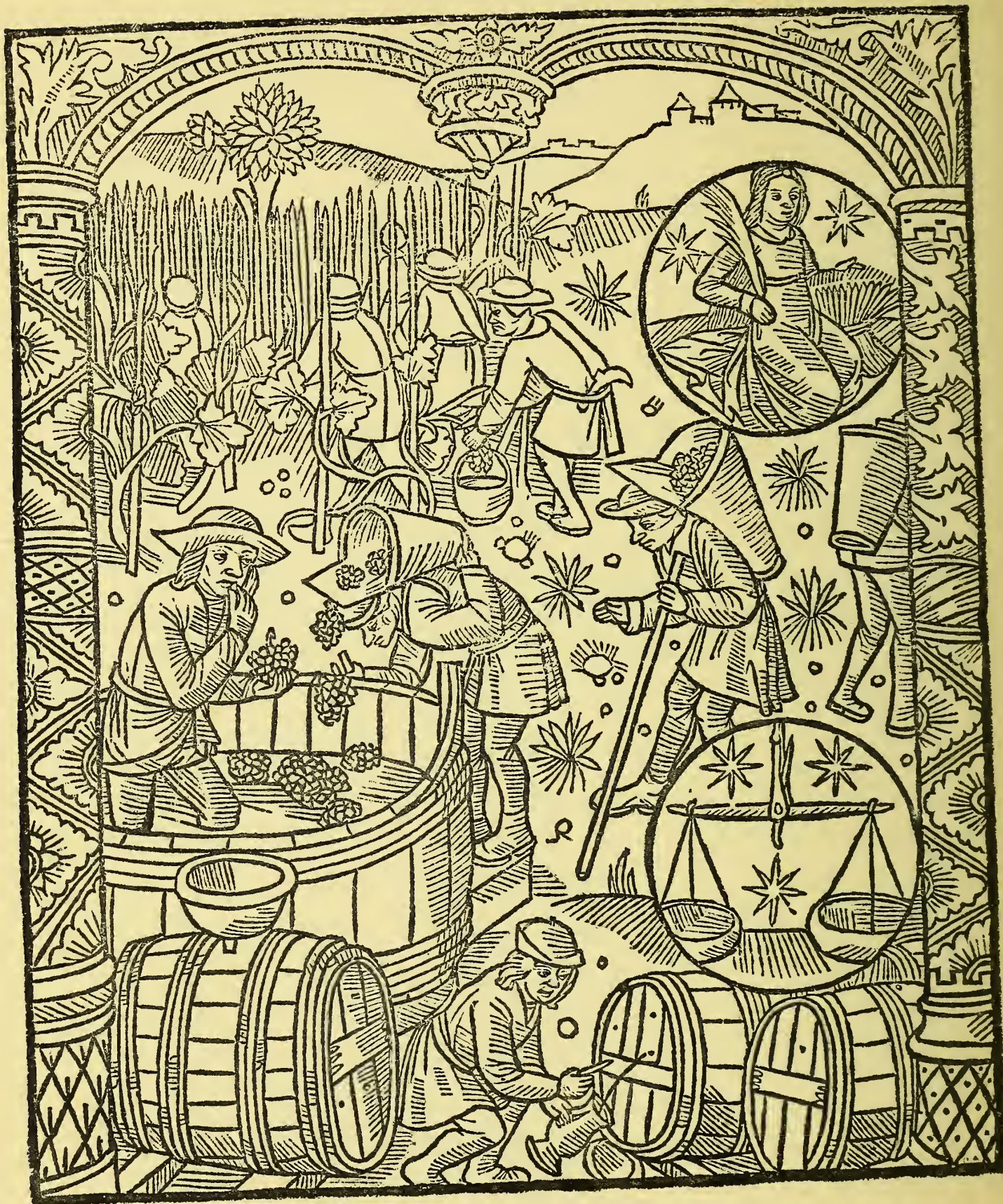
After that then commeth August: then we gather in
our corne, and also the fruits of the earth. And
then doth man his diligence to gather for to find him-
selfe withall, in the time that he may neither get nor
win, and then after that vi. yeares is he xlviii. yeare old.

August

IT is now August, and the Sunne is some what towards his declination, yet such is his heat as hardeneth the soft clay, dries vp the standing ponds, wythereth the sappy leaues and scorcheth the skin of the naked: now beginne the Gleaners to follow the Corne Cart, and a little bread to a great deale of drinke makes the Trauailers dinner: the Melowne and the Cucumber is now in request: and Oyle and vineger giue attendance on the Sallet hearbes: the Alehouse is more frequented then the Tauerne, and a fresh Riuer is more comfortable then a fiery Furnace: the Bathe is now much visited by diseased bodies, and in the fayre Riuers, swimming is a sweet exercise: the Bow and the Bowle picke many a purse, and the Cockes with their heeles spurne away many a mans wealth: the Pipe and the Taber is now lustily set on worke, and the Lad and the Lasse will haue no lead on their heeles: the new Wheat makes the Gossips Cake, and the Bride Cup is carried aboue the heads of the whole Parish: the Furmenty pot welcomes home the Haruest cart, and the Garland of flowers crownes the Captaine of the Reapers. Oh, 'tis the merry time, wherein honest Neighbours make goodcheere, and God is glorified in his blessings on the earth. In summe, for that I find, I thus conclude, I hold it the world's welfare, and the earths Warming-pan. Farewell.

September hath xxx days

September blow soft
Till fruit be in loft.



September

Who can my name perfectly remember,
With the commodities of my season,
Dought of right to call me September,
Plenteous of goods by all manner reason,
As wheat, rie, oates, beanes, fitches, & peason,
Of which fruit euery man ought to haue in store,
To liue directly, and thanke the Lord therefore.



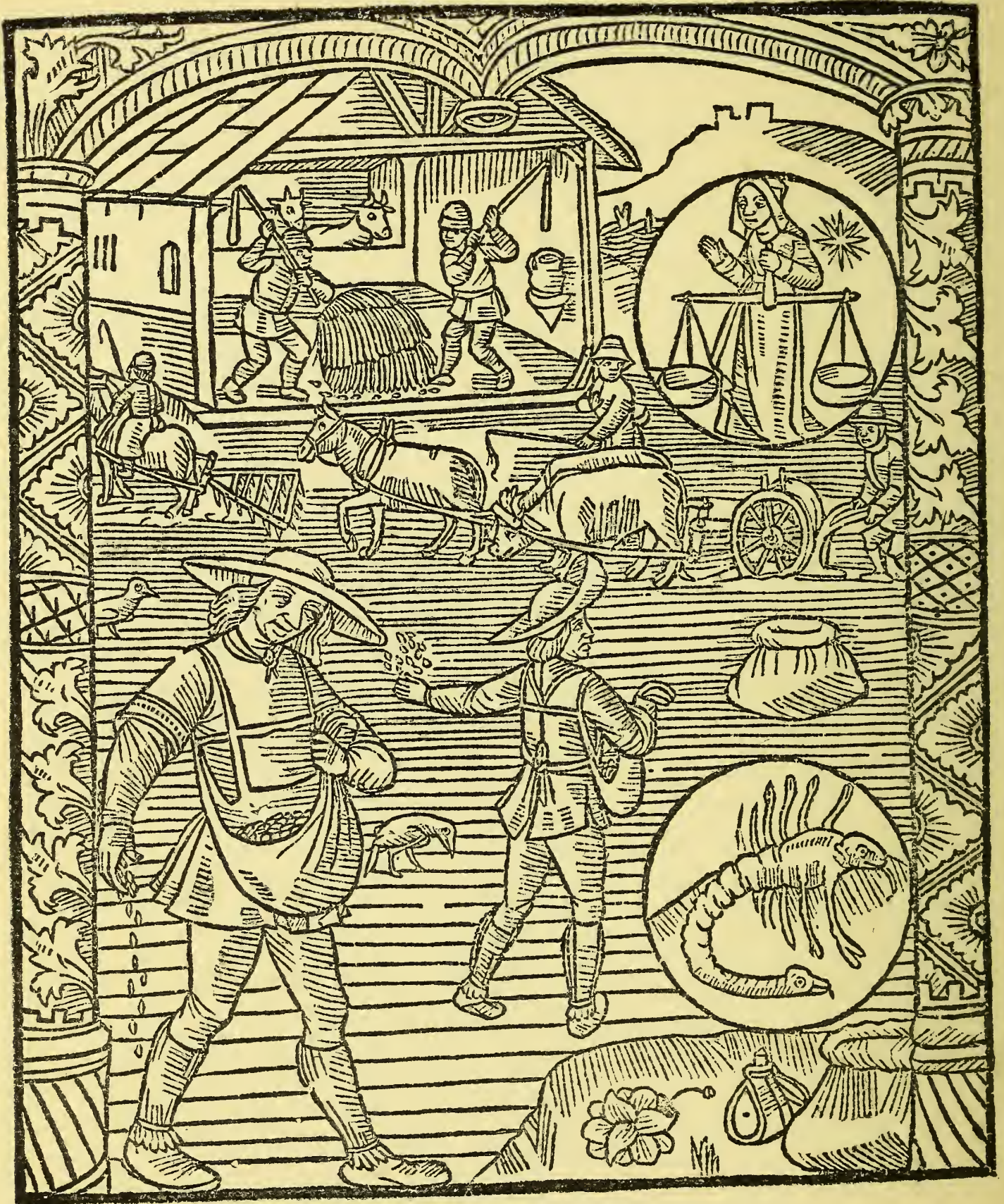
Then commeth September: that wines be made, and
the fruits of trees be gathered. And then therewithall
he doth freshly beginne to garnish his house and make
prouision of needfull things for to liue in winter, which
draweth very nere. and then is man, in his most ioyfull
& coragious estate. prosperous in wisdome, purposing to
gather and keepe as much as should be sufficient for him
in his old age, when he may gather no more, and these
sire yeares maketh him liiii. yeares.

September

IT is now September, and the Sunne begins to fall much from his height, the medowes are left bare, by the mouthes of hungry Cattell, and the Hogges are turned into the Corne fields: the windes begin to knocke the Apples heads together on the trees, and the fallings are gathered to fill the Pyes for the Houshold: the Saylers fall to worke to get afore the winde, and if they spy a storme, it puts them to prayer: the Souldier now begins to shrug at the weather, and the Campe dissolued, the Companies are put to Garison: the Lawyer now begins his Haruest, and the client payes for words by waight: the Innes now begin to prouide for ghests, and the night-eaters in the stable, pinch the Trauailer in his bed: Paper, pen, and inke are much in request, and the quarter Sessions take order with the way-layers: Coales and wood make toward the Chimney, and Ale and Sacke are in account with good fellowes: the Butcher now knocks downe the great Beeues, and the Poulters feathers make toward the Upholster: Walflet Oysters are the Fish wiues wealth, and Pippins fine are the Costermongers rich merchandise: the flayle and the fan fall to worke in the Barne, and the Corne market is full of the Bakers: the Porkets now are driuen to the Woods, and the home-fed Pigges make porke for the market. In briefe, I thus conclude of it, I hold it the Winters forewarning, and the Summers farewell. Adieu.

October hath xxxi days

October good blast,
To blow the hog mast.

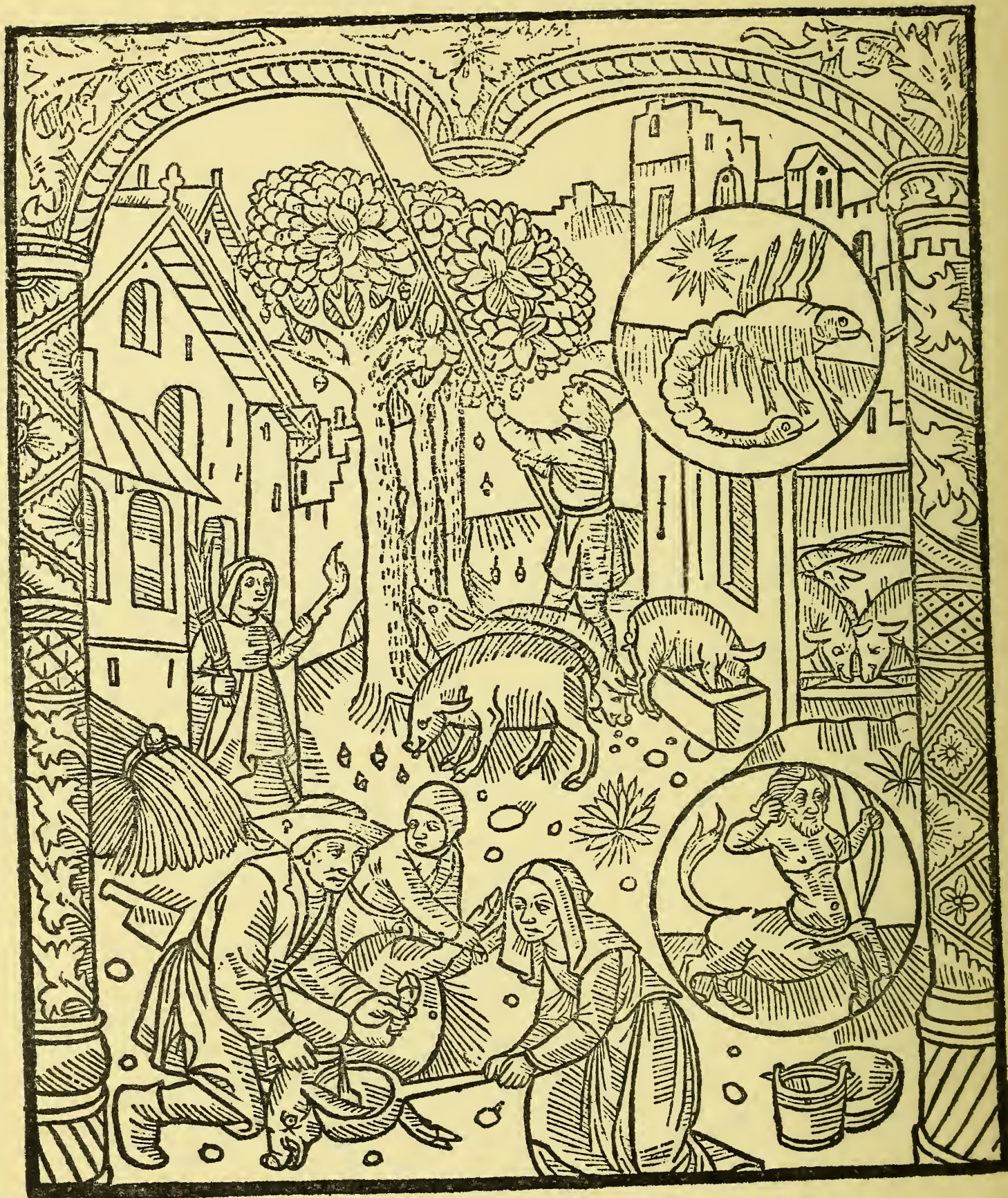


October

Among the other October I hight,
Friend unto Vintners naturally,
And in my time Bacchus is ready dight,
All manner wine to presse and clarifie,
Of which is sacred, as we see dayly,
The blessed body of Christ in signe of flesh & bloud,
Which is our hope, refection and foode.



AND then commeth October: that all is into the fore-
sayd house gathered but corne, and also other maner
fruits. And also the labourers soweth newe seedes in the
earth, for the yeare to come. And when he that soweth
nought, shall nought gather. And then in their other sixe
yeares a man shall take himselfe unto God for to do
penance and good works, and then the benefits the yeare
after his death, he may gather and haue spirituall profite,
and then is man full in the terme of lx. yeares.



November

Nouember will not abide behind,
To shew my kindly worthinesse and ore,
For in my time the blasts of wind,
Abateth leaues, and sheddeth their verdure,
Wherefore euery prudent creature
Dought for to liue right as they would die,
For all things taketh end naturally.



Then commeth Nouember: that the dayes be very short, and the sun in maner giueth little heat, and the trees looseth their leaues. The fields that were greene, look horie and gray. When al maner of hearbes be hidde in the ground, & then appeareth no flowers. And then winter is come that a man hath vnderstanding of age, and hath lost his kindly heate and strength: His teeth beginne to rotte, and also to chatter, and then, hath he no more hope of long life, but desireth to come to the life euerlasting, and these sixe for this moneth maketh him three score and sixe yeares.

November

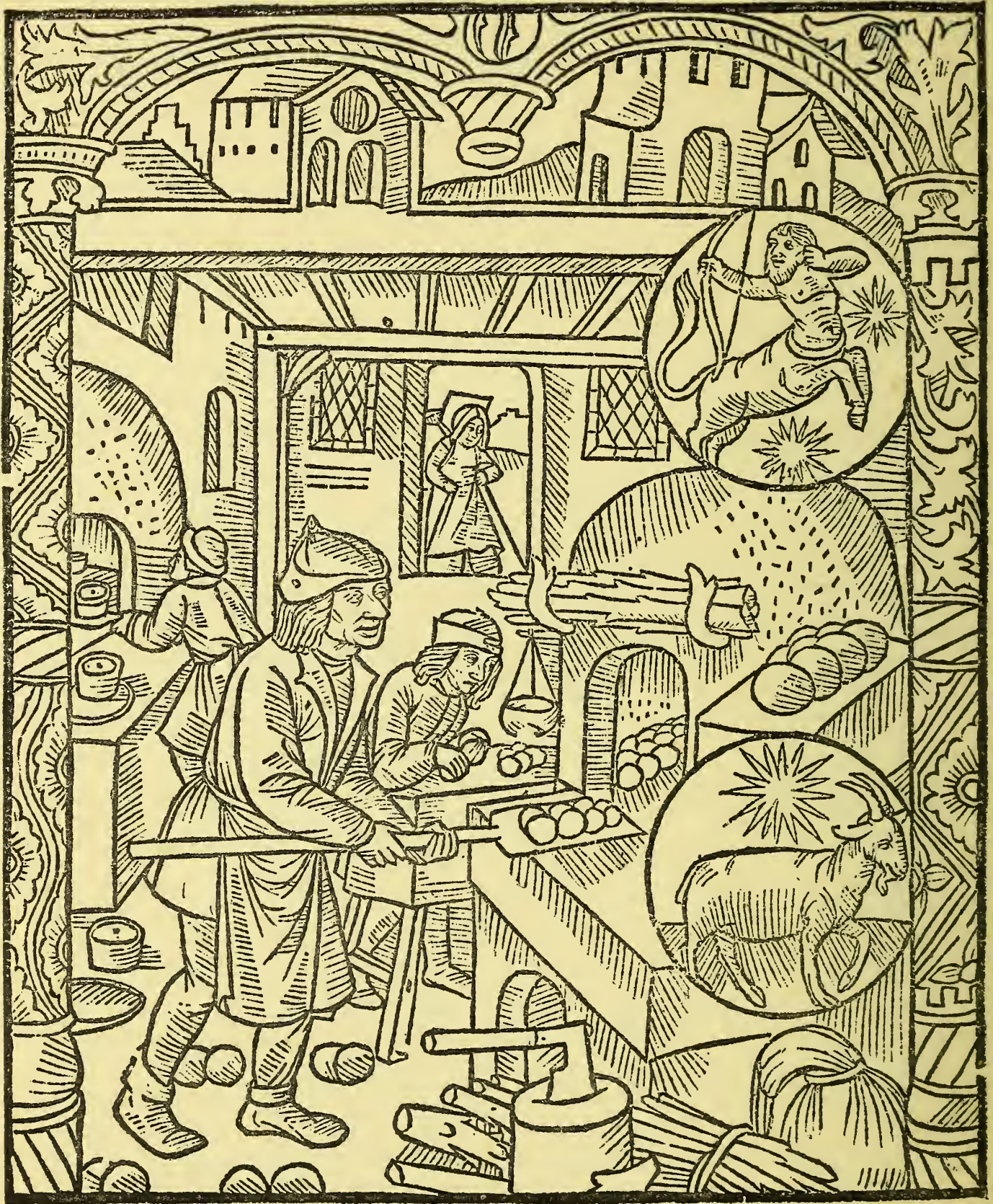
IT is now Nouember, and according to the old Prouerbe,

Let the Thresher take his flayle,
And the ship no more sayle :

for the high winds and the rough seas will try the ribs of the Shippe, and the hearts of the Sailers: Now come the Countrey people all wet to the Market, and the toyling Carriers are pittifully moyled: The yong Herne and the Shoulerd are now fat for the great Feast, and the Woodcocke begins to make toward the Cockeshoot: the Warriners now beginne to plie their haruest, and the Butcher, after a good bargaine drinks a health to the Grasier: the Cooke and the Comfit-maker, make ready for Christmas, and the Minstrels in the Countrey, beat their boyes for false fingring: Schollers before breakefast haue a cold stomacke to their bookes, and a Master without Art is fit for an A.B.C. A red herring and a cup of Sacke, make warre in a weake stomacke, and the poore mans fast, is better then the Gluttons surfet: Trenchers and dishes are now necessary seruants, and a locke to the Cubboord keeps a bit for a neede: Now beginnes the Goshauke to weede the wood of the Phesant and the Mallard loues not to heare the belles of the Faulcon: The winds now are cold, and the Ayre chill, and the poore die through want of Charitie: Butter and Cheese beginne to rayse their prices, and Kitchen stuffe is a commoditie, that euery man is not acquainted with. In summe, with a conceit of the chilling cold of it, I thus conclude in it: I hold it the discomfort of Nature, and Reasons patience. Farewell.

December hath xxxi days

O dirtie December
For Christmas remember.



December

December euery man doth me call,
In whose time the mother inuiolate,
Deliuered was in an olde Dre stall,
Of Iesu Christ Gods owne sonne incarnate,
Wherefore I thinke me the most fortunate
Of all other, to whom pray we then
That we may come vnto his blisse, Amen.



Then commeth December: full of colde with frost and snow, with great windes and stormy weather, that a man may not labour nor nought do: the sun is then at the lowest that it may descend, then the trees & the earth is hid in snow, then is it good to hold them nie the fire, and to spend the goods that they gathered in summer. For then beginneth mans haire to wax white & gray, & his body crooked & feeble, & then he loseth the perfect vnderstanding, and that six yeares maketh him ful lxxii. yeare, and if he liue any more, it is by his good guiding and dieting in his youth. Howbeit, it is possible that a man may liue till he be an hundred yeares of age, but there are but few that come thereto.

December

IT is now December, and hee that walkes the streets, shall find durt on his shooes, Except hee go all in bootes: Now doth the Lawyer make an end of his haruest, and the Client of his purse: Now Capons and Hennes, beside Turkies, Geese and Duckes, besides Beefe and Mutton, must all die for the great feast, for in twelue dayes a multitude of people will not bee fed with a little; Now plummes and spice, Sugar and Honey, square it among pies and broth, and Gossip I drinke to you, and you are welcome, and I thanke you, and how doe you, and I pray you bee merrie: Now are the Taylors and the Tiremakers full of worke against the Holidayes, and Musicke now must bee in tune, or else neuer: the youth must dance and sing, and the aged sit by the fire. It is the Law of Nature, and no Contradiction in reason: The Asse that hath borne all the yeare, must now take a little rest, and the leane Oxe must feed till hee bee fat: the Footman now shall haue many a foule step, and the Ostler shall haue worke enough about the heeles of the Horses, while the Tapster, if hee take not heed, will lie drunke in the Seller: The prices of meat will rise apace, and the apparell of the proud will make the Taylor rich: Dice and Cardes, will benefit the Butler: And if the Cooke doe not lacke wit, hee will sweetly licke his fingers: Starchers and Launderers will haue their hands full of worke, and Periwigs and painting wil not bee a little set by,

Strange stuffes will bee well sold,
Strange tales well told,
Strange sights much sought,
Strange things much bought,
And what else as fals out.

To conclude, I hold it the costly Purueyor of Excesse, and the after breeder of necessitie, the practice of Folly, and the Purgatory of Reason. Farewell.



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